

last weekend about 1,250 students from all 50 states and the District of Columbia gathered for the national finals. The format is a simulated congressional hearing on an issue requiring application of constitutional principles. Each team has four minutes to present its prepared position and then must answer unscripted questions from a trio of contest judges for another six.

"The whole class comes to Washington," Chuck Quigley, the program director, explained. "This is not like a debate meet, where the best and brightest represent the school. Each class divides into six teams—one for each unit of the course—and each team 'testifies' once in each round. You can't have cliques or factions. Everyone has to cooperate for the school to do well."

In a 1994 evaluation of the program, Stanford political scientist Richard Brody found it particularly successful in promoting tolerance of dissenting views and active participation in the political system. Carly Celmer, a member of the team representing Florida, said, "It teaches you that people can make mistakes, but our structure of government is really sound."

Elaine Savukas, who teaches the Pennsylvania students I watched, said her husband, the principal of Hempfield High—"a school of exactly the same size as Columbine in the same kind of suburban community"—values the course because "it shows kids there are ways to work through disagreements other than violence."

Mary Catherine Bradshaw, the teacher of the Hillsboro High School entry from Nashville, Tenn., said "Taunting is pervasive in every high school." But her class, on its own initiative, came up with a checklist of actions federal, state and local authorities might take to prevent another Littleton. And then one student said, "There is something we can do as individuals." And the class began circulating a pledge that "as part of the community . . . I will eliminate taunting from my own behavior. I will encourage others to do the same . . . and if others won't become part of the solution, I will."

They put the pledge on their Web site and now are hearing that it's been adopted at high schools all over the United States.

The competition—and the underlying course—have attracted celebrity backers. Henry Hyde has coached classes in his district; Hillary Clinton, Kenneth Starr and several Supreme Court justices met with schools in this year's competition.

Anthony Corrado, a distinguished political scientist at Colby College in Maine, has judged the contest for eight years and has helped train teachers at summer institutes on using the curriculum. He takes the time, he told me, because "the best antidote to cynicism is understanding the basic principles of our system of government and being challenged to apply them to today's problems."

This is a course most of us adults could use.

(The phone numbers of the Center for Civic Education are 818-591-9321 or 202-861-8800.)

#### IN HONOR OF JOHN PETER, RETIRING PRESIDENT OF KIDSPeACE

#### HON. TIM ROEMER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of our nation's most vision-

ary and dedicated public servants, Mr. John Peter, who will be retiring next month as President and CEO of KidsPeace.

As many of you know, KidsPeace is a 115-year old, not-for-profit organization which helps young people face personal crisis and prepare for life's daily challenges. When John first started working at KidsPeace in 1974, the organization provided a refuge for about 40 troubled kids in northeastern Pennsylvania.

But John had a greater vision for the organization than that. He realized that children everywhere were coming under increasing pressure from broken homes, violence, drugs and other troubling influences in society. He knew that in order to truly help the children it was serving, KidsPeace had to find a way to get to them before trouble set in, and provide a structure to help them cope with the added burdens in their lives.

Utilizing his skills as a businessman and social worker, and inspired by his training in theology, John set out to expand the KidsPeace mission nationwide. The results have been spectacular. Under John's leadership, KidsPeace has grown from a single facility in Pennsylvania to the nation's leading organization helping kids overcome crisis.

KidsPeace now helps more than 2,000 children a day at 25 centers across the country, and serves millions more each year through public education and outreach programs. Hundreds of business leaders, doctors, entertainers, athletes and civic figures donate their time and support to the KidsPeace mission.

At a time of increasing violence and turmoil in our society, children across the country know they can turn to KidsPeace for help in facing tough situations at home, problems with friends or in school, or for guidance in becoming stronger, wiser and healthier kids.

I have had the privilege of working closely with John and the KidsPeace organization over the years through the Children's Working Group, which I founded to help give voice to America's kids. We hosted two major press conferences at which KidsPeace released the results of its national surveys of American teenagers and pre-teens.

We also joined together to unveil the latest KidsPeace initiative: a Web site for young people called TeenCentral.net. I am pleased to note that since its inception, this site has received more than a million visits by kids, and has been named one of the top Web sites in the country.

Mr. Speaker, Helen Keller once observed that optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. In my view, John Peter is the ultimate optimist. He believes that every child in America deserves a chance to reach his full potential, and that no child should be left behind. He has dedicated his life to this cause and our nation has benefited greatly from his efforts.

I congratulate John on his many accomplishments with KidsPeace and the outstanding work he has done to help children and families overcome crisis. He may be retiring from KidsPeace, but his contributions will endure for decades to come.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SANTA BARBARA CARRILLO COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER AND THE GRAND OPENING OF THE SENIOR INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE

#### HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate Older American's Month and to bring to the attention of my colleagues the 75th Anniversary of the Carrillo Community Recreation Center of Santa Barbara, California.

The City of Santa Barbara has long placed a high priority on providing a safe place for senior citizens to engage in health education and recreations pursuits. It is due to this commitment that the Senior Information and Referral Service has been established. This project represents a strong partnership between the City of Santa Barbara Parks and Recreation Department, the American Association of Retired Persons, the Area Agency on Aging and the Retired Senior Volunteer program. Now seniors in Santa Barbara will have a "seamless" referral system where their questions will be answered and their needs met.

I am also proud to tell my colleagues that this year represents the 17th Anniversary of the 90+ Club which celebrates all citizens in Santa Barbara who are 90 years of age and older. This Club has been sponsored by the City Parks and Recreation Department, the Valle Verde Retirement Community and the Southern California Gas Company. I commend these fine organizations for their contributions to seniors and our community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join the City of Santa Barbara and the senior citizens whom I represent on the Central Coast in celebration of Older American's Month. I wish the Carrillo Community Recreation Center many more years of success and prosperity.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote 94 "On Agreeing to the Conference Report on the Education Flexibility Partnership Act."

Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote 94.

#### IN HONOR OF CHILDCARE PROVIDER APPRECIATION DAY

#### HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 1999

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Nation's childcare providers